



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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June 18, 2003

Ref: 8EPR-SR

Mr. Ron Carter
Libby Biomass Working Group
313 ½ California Avenue
Libby, MT 59923

RE: Libby Forest Biomass Comprehensive Plan

Dear Ron:

Several times over the past few months, representatives from the Libby Biomass Working Group have met with me regarding the Libby Forest Biomass Comprehensive Plan (description attached). The Plan calls for harvesting of forest slash and converting it to heat and electricity through a co-generation system. During these meetings, we have discussed many environmental aspects of your biomass plan, and you have presented me with data regarding air quality issues. At our last meeting, you asked if I, on behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), was able to provide an endorsement for your plan as you continue to seek funding, assistance, and partnerships.

As the Superfund Project Manager for Libby, I am certainly not the appropriate person within EPA to conduct a detailed review of the technical or economic merits of your plan. My expertise with issues of forestry management and biomass facilities is limited, and this is certainly not a Superfund issue. I have made that clear in our meetings. However, as a government official charged with protecting the public health in Libby, I can certainly provide my support for consideration of any project that has the potential to create positive economic and environmental impacts for Libby. Due to the past history of asbestos-related and other lung disease in Libby, there is certainly every reason to fully consider and investigate all means of improving air quality in the Libby air shed. Based on my impression of the information you presented me, it seems likely that your plan is more environmentally friendly than past operations at the Stimson Lumber mill, and that it may have other environmental benefits as well.

I have provided this letter to the Assistant Regional Administrator of EPA Region 8, Max Dodson. As he mentioned during a visit to Libby on June 12, 2003, I am hoping Max may be able to facilitate contact with other personnel or departments of EPA that may be of direct assistance. I appreciate your efforts on behalf of Libby and your communication with me. If you



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have any questions, or need to follow up, please contact me through the EPA Information Center in Libby at 293-6194.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Christiansen', with a stylized, cursive script.

Jim Christiansen
Remedial Project Manager

cc: Max H. Dodson, ARA, Office of Ecosystems Protection and Remediation